



# Ukiyo-e

■ Pictures  
■ of the  
■ Floating World

▽ Asian



# Ukiyo-e

- It is an art closely connected with the appreciation and beauty of theatres, restaurants, teahouses, and geisha.
- Ukiyo-e images and texts frequently referred to themes from classical, literary, and historical sources
- Many *ukiyo-e* prints by artists like Utamaro and Sharaku were in fact posters, advertising theater performances, or portraits of popular actors and beautiful teahouse girls.
- also the traditional Japanese love of nature, and *ukiyo-e* artists like Hokusai and Hiroshige have had an enormous impact on landscape painting all over the world.



# *Ukiyo-e Japanese Woodblock Prints*

- Ukiyo-e was initially considered "low" art, by and for, the non-elite classes
- artistic and technical caliber is consistently remarkable.
- It was affordable, reprintable art for the middle class.

The result was an art that was both populist (of and for the people, readily accessible, plentiful, affordable) and highly sophisticated.

In summary, Ukiyo-e presented both the historical and all that was current, fashionable, chic, and popular.



# *The Floating World*

Usually the word *ukiyo* is literally translated a "floating world" in English, referring to a conception of an

- Evanescent, fleeting, temporary world
- The term is also an ironic allusion to the homophone "Sorrowful World" (憂き世): the earthly plane of death and rebirth from which Buddhists sought release.
- fleeting beauty
- a realm of entertainments divorced from the responsibilities of the mundane, everyday world

*In the hands of the Ukiyo-e artist,  
the ordinary was transformed into the  
extraordinary.*



# Beauties



*The Sketchbooks of Hiroshige* (*Hiroshige gajō*),

ca. 1840.

Album of hand-drawn sketches in two vols.,  
10 in. x 6 1/4 in. Ink and pigment on paper.



A Geisha Performing as Toraya Toramaru (Toraya Toramaru) from An Almanac of Geisha Imitating Famous Actors (Furyu Geisha Miburi Sugata-e). By Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825). Ink and colors on paper. Gift of the Grabhorn Ukiyo-e Collection, 2005.100.100.



A young lady looking at the moon from a window (Ariwara no Narihira), from Six Fashionable Poets (Furyu rok'kasen). By Suzuki Harunobu (1724-1770). Japan. Woodblock print, Ink and colors on paper. *Gift of the Grabhorn Ukiyo-e Collection*, 2005.100.32.

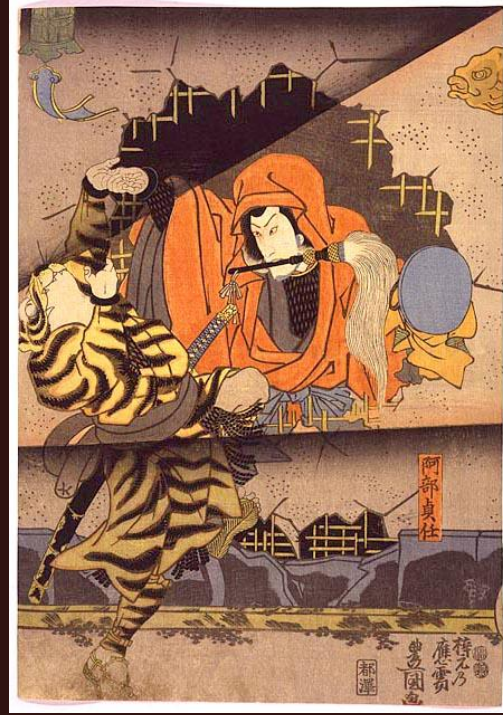






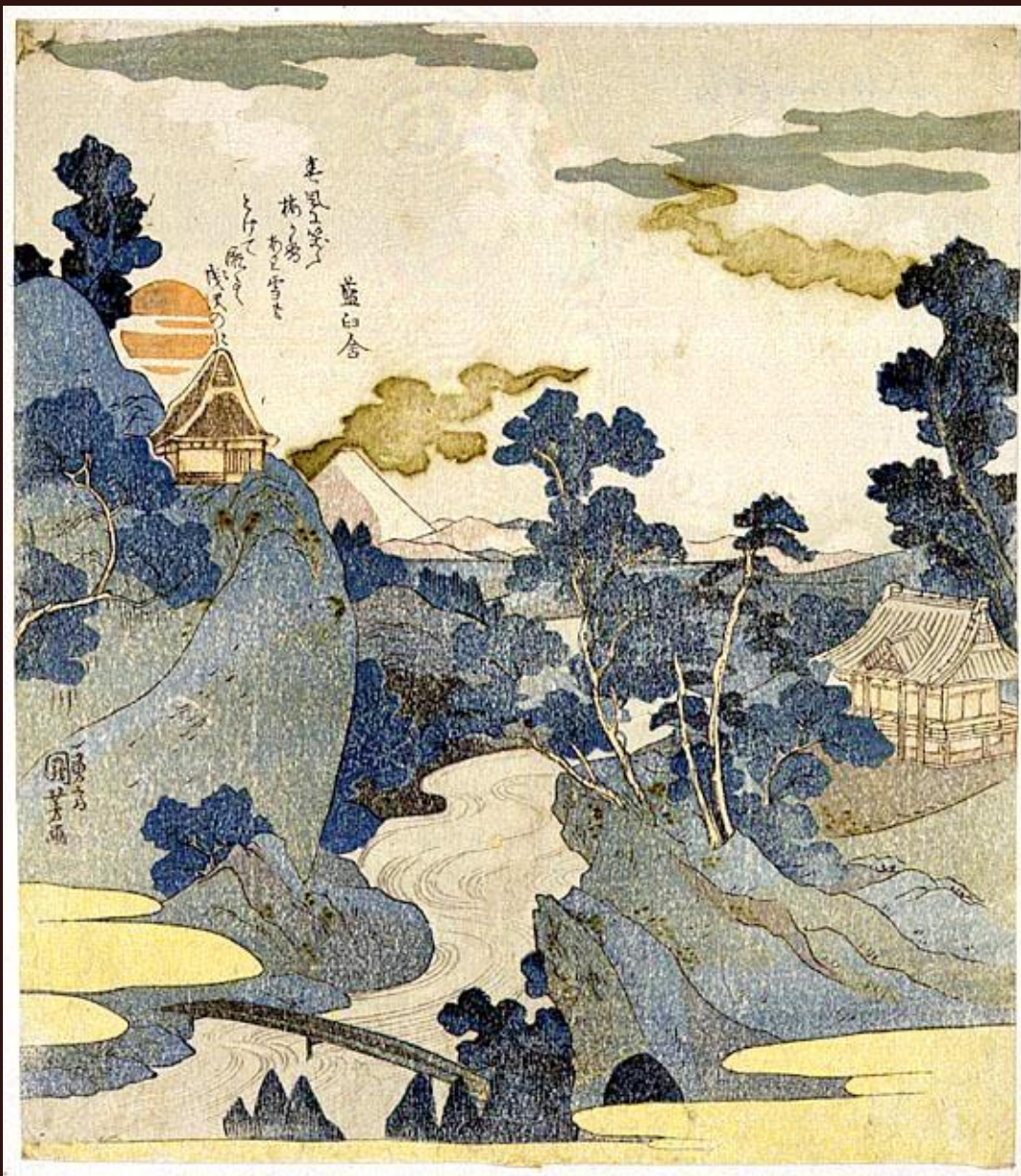
# Actors

Color woodblock print, *ōban* triptych, 15 in. x 10 in. each.



A Kabuki actor as the bandit Shiro in falling snow, from the play Five Courageous Bandits in Five Colors, white, 1850-1900. By Toyohara Kunichika (1835-1900). Japan. Woodblock print, ink and colors on paper. Gift of Toshiro Nakayama, 2010.256.





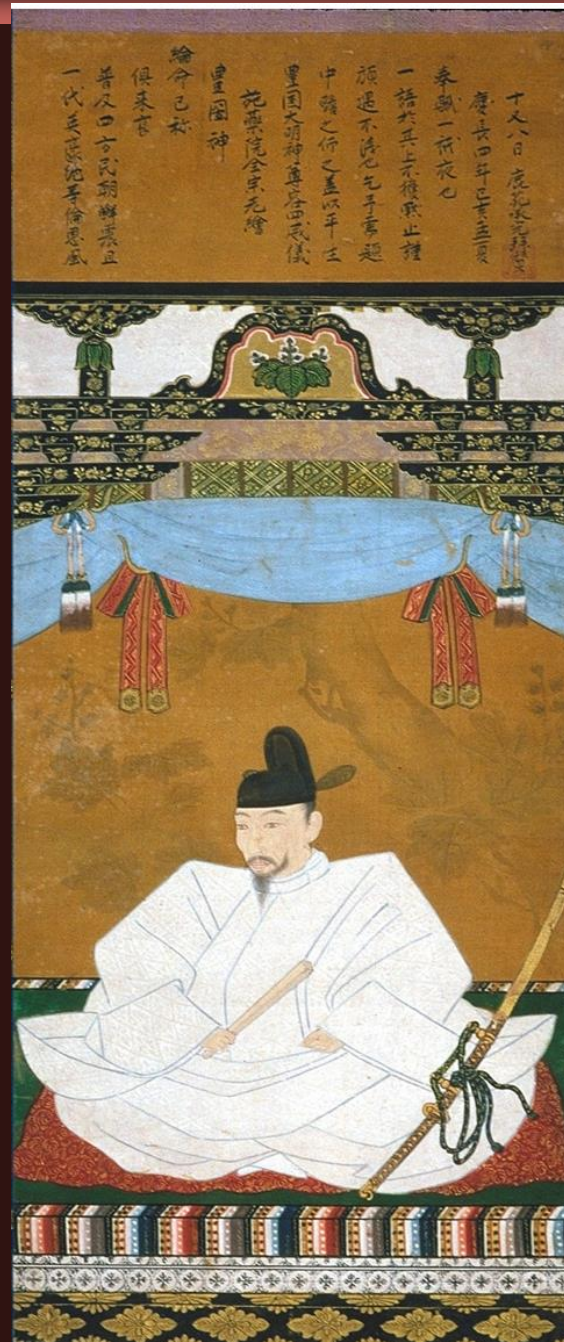
Utagawa  
Kuniyoshi.  
*The Stream  
of Asazawa in  
Spring* 1828.  
Color  
woodblock  
print, *chûban*,  
10 in. x 7 1/2  
in.

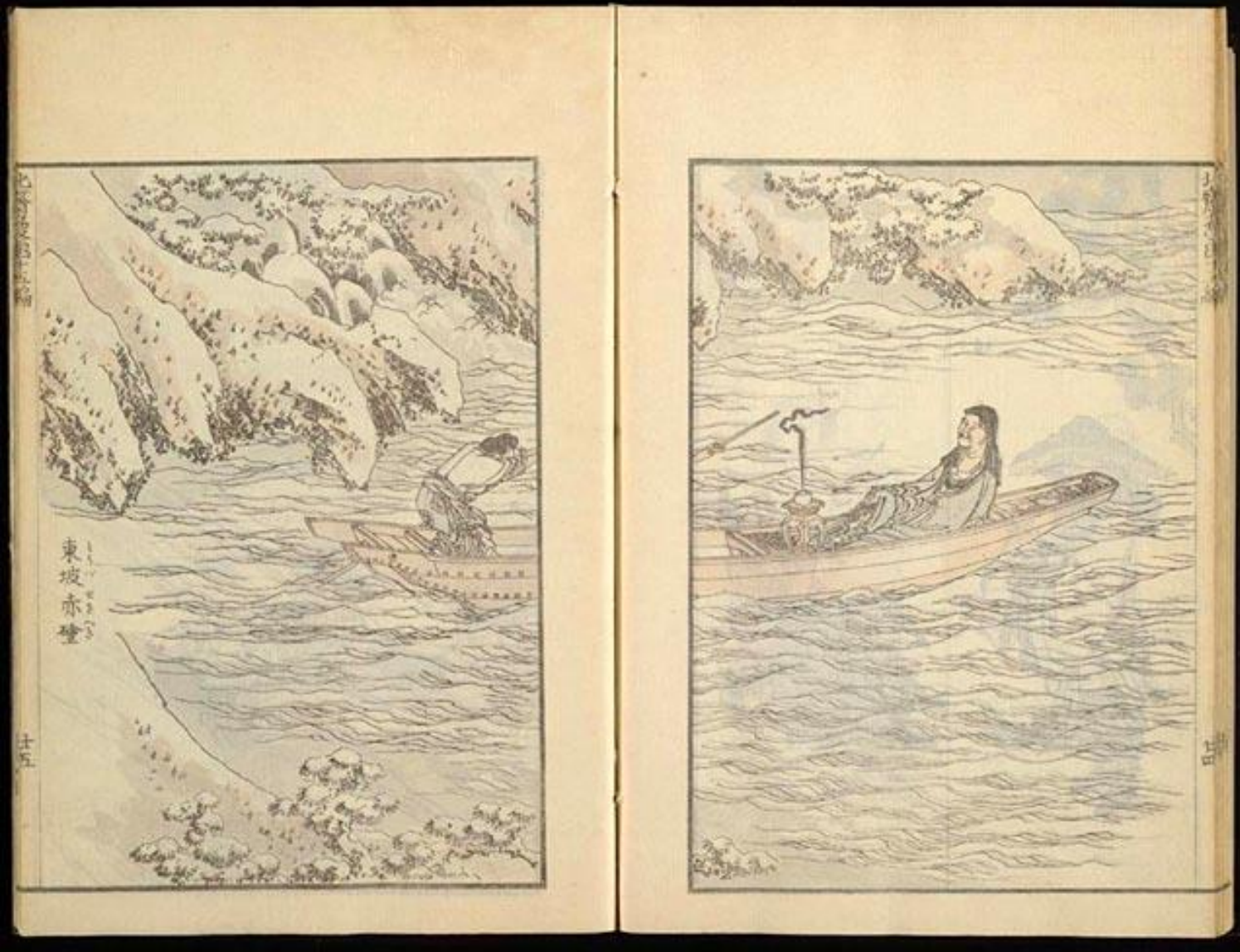
# History, Legend, and Myth



Adachi Ginkô.  
*Scenes from the Tale of the Heike*  
(*Heike monogatari*), 1886.  
Color woodblock print, *ôban*, 15 in. x 10 in.

Portrait of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, 1599, by Seisho Shotai. Japan. Edo period (1615–1868). Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk. *Gift and Purchase from the Harry G.C. Packard Collection Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Shujiro Shimada; The Avery Brundage Collection, 1991.61*





■ Katsushika Hokusai.  
*The Hokusai Sketchbooks (Hokusai manga)*.  
Nagoya: Katano (Eirakuya) Tōshirō, 1814-78.  
Woodblock-printed books, 9 in. x 6 1/4 in.



くへる急

手師時宗

若平治

国主分彦

仁木

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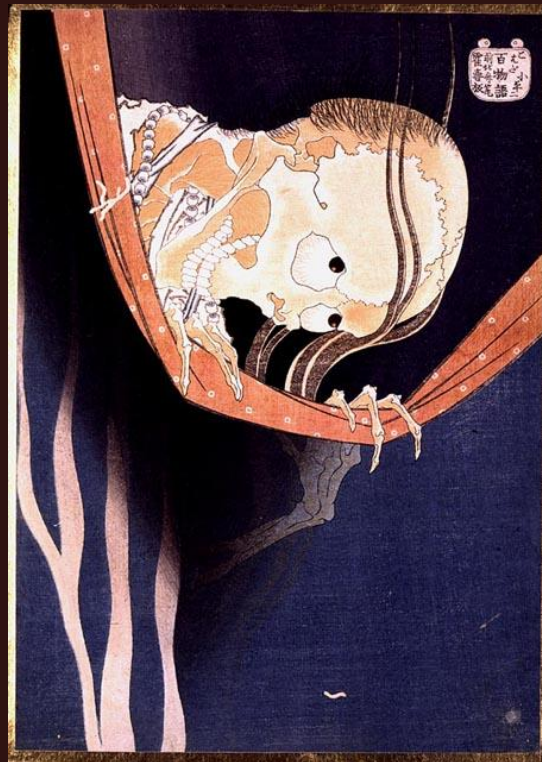
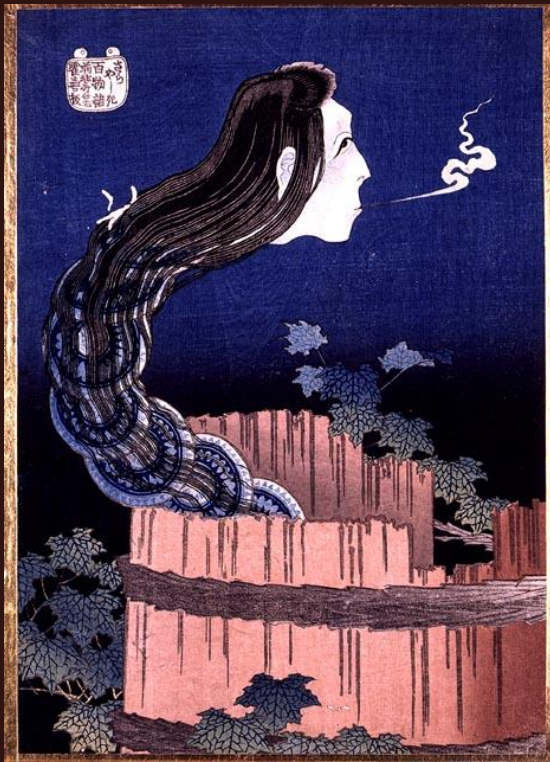
仁木



# The Fantastic

■ Katsushika Hokusai.  
*One Hundred Tales (Hyaku monogatari)*.  
Edo: Tsuruya Kiemon, 1830.

Album containing five color woodblock prints, 12 in. x 10 in. each.



# Poetry & Narrative

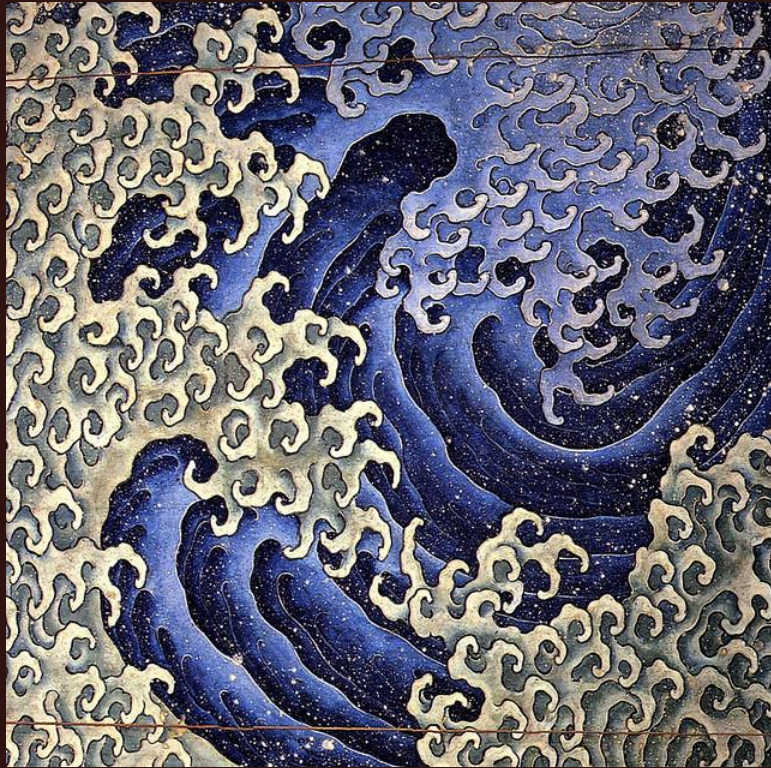


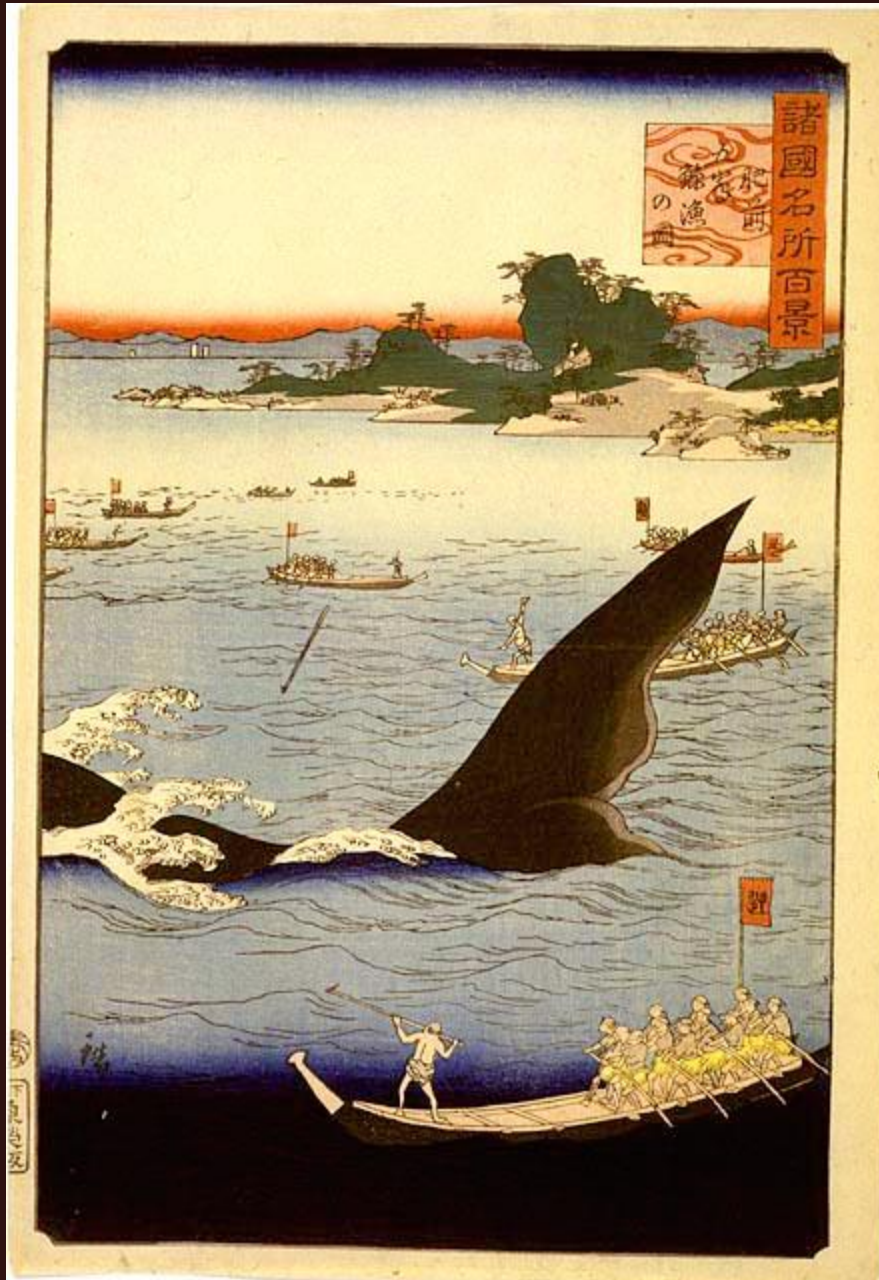
Katsushika  
Hokusai

Peony and  
Canary

ca. 1825.  
Color  
woodblock  
print, 7 1/4in  
x 7 3/4 in.





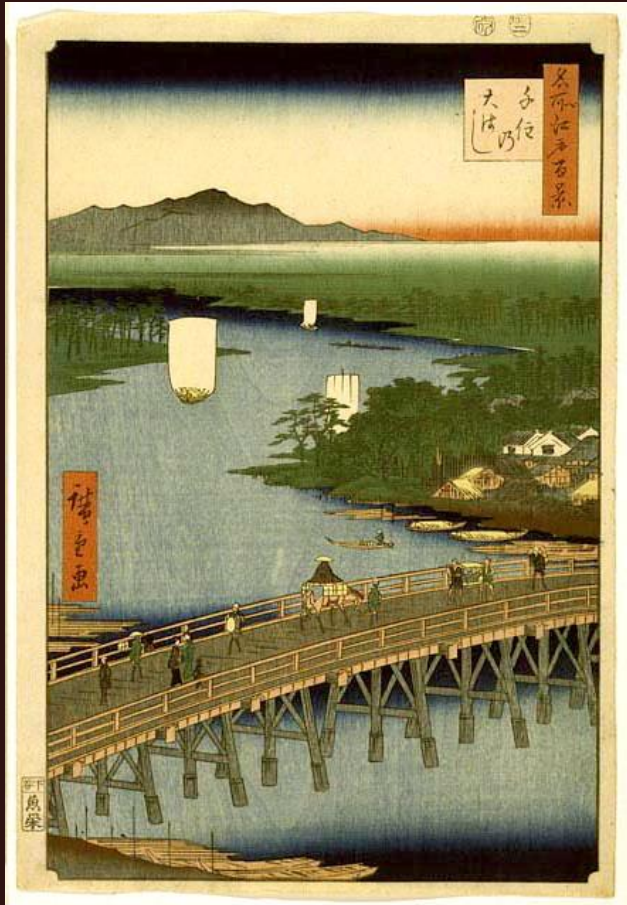


Utagawa Kunisada and Utagawa Hiroshige.  
*Modern Genji: Viewing in Snow (Fûryû Genji yuki no nagame)*, ca. 1840.  
[Image 1](#) - [Image 2](#) - [Image 3](#)

Color woodblock print, *ôban* triptych, 15 in. x 10 in. each.



# Landscapes



Utagawa Hiroshige.

"Distant View of Kinryûsan from Azuma Bridge" 1856.  
Color woodblock print, *ôban*, 15 in. x 10 in.

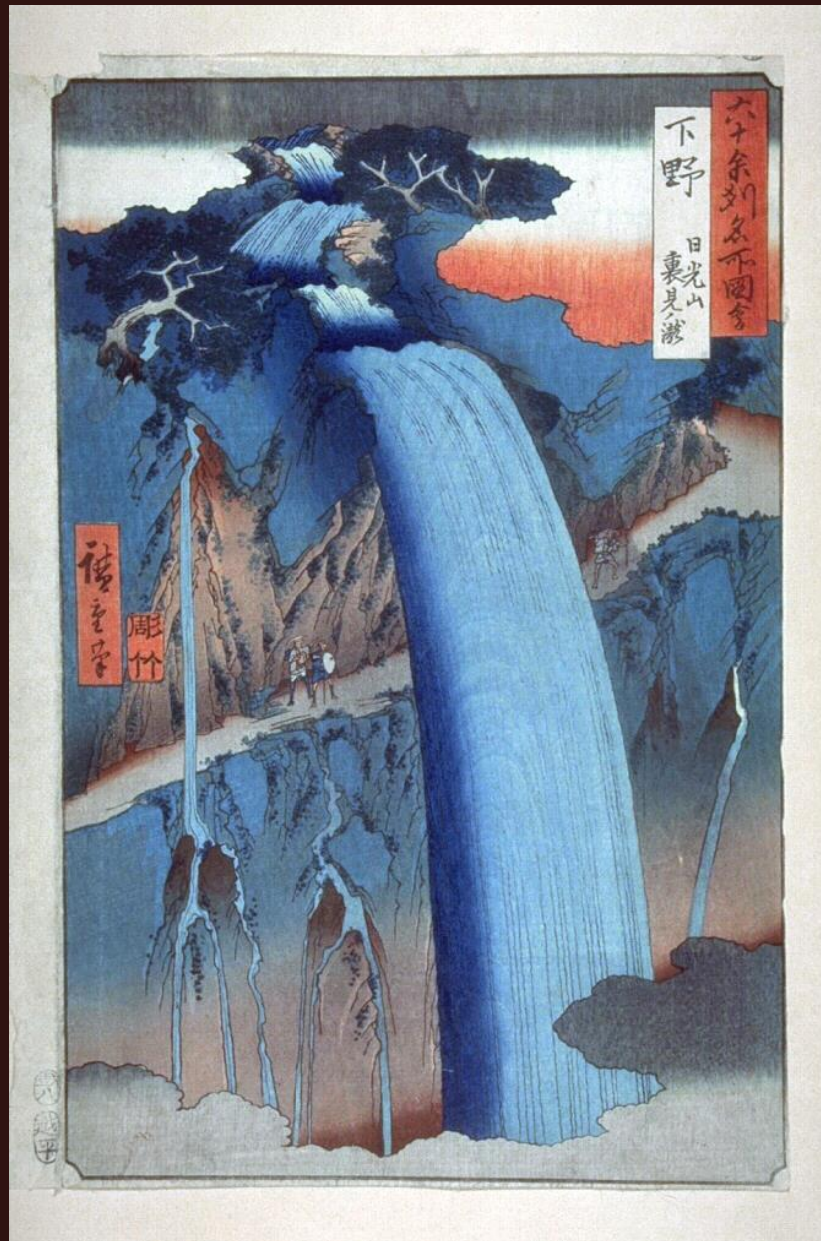


Utagawa Hiroshige.

"Great Bridge at Senju" (*Senju no ôhashi*)  
from the series *A Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1856.

Color woodblock, *ôban*, 15 in. x 10 in.

The Urami Waterfall in Niko from *Picture of Famous Places in the Sixty-odd Provinces*, 1853. By Ando Hiroshige (1797–1858). Ink and colors on paper. Gift of Japanese Prints from the Collection of Emmeline Johnson. Donated by Oliver and Elizabeth Johnson, 1994.48.





***Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji***

is an ukiyo-e series of large, color woodblock prints by the Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849).

The series depicts Mount Fuji in differing seasons and weather conditions from a variety of different places and distances.

It actually consists of 46 prints created between 1826 and 1833. The first 36 were included in the original publication and, due to their popularity, ten more were added after the original publication.





Asian





Mount Fuji in Clear Weather  
(also known as Red Fuji)



Umegawa in Sagami province





*Hakone Lake in Sagami Province from the series 36 Views of Mt. Fuji. Japan. Ink and colors on paper. Gift of Japanese Prints from the Collection of Emmeline Johnson, Donated by Oliver and Elizabeth Johnson, 1994.46*